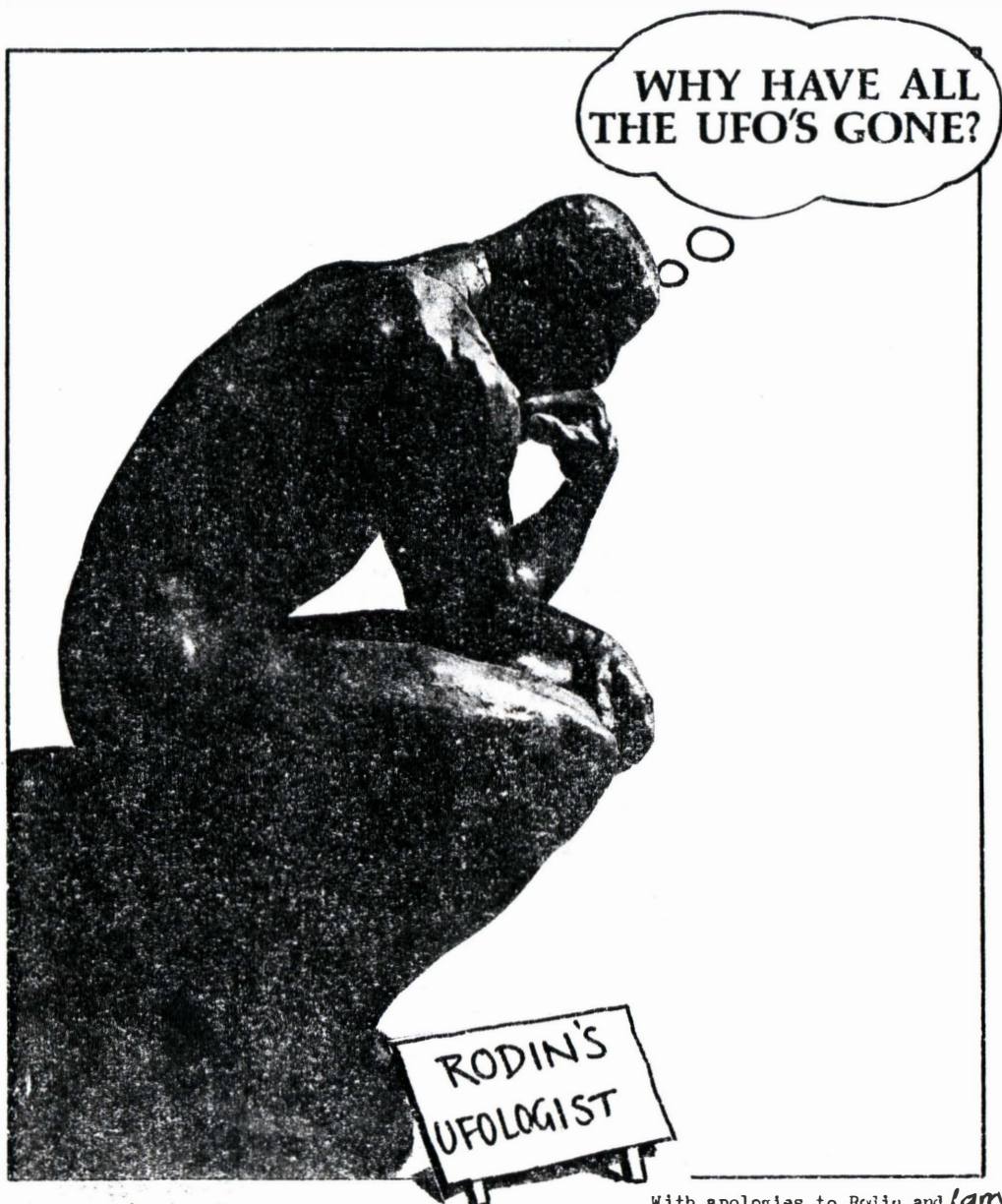


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With apologies to Rodin and *Larry*

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EDITORIAL

In a thoughtful response to Nigel Watson's letter in the last issue of MAGONIA, Jenny Randles raises a number of points which deserve wider consideration, as they raise questions about the relationship between UFO research and the UFO writer. She has also touched on the problems inherent in being a 'full-time UFO author' in Editorials in Northern UFO News.

Ms Randles states in her letter to us: "...most publishers will not accept anything unless it fulfills three criteria: a) It is written in a fashion that will be readable to a wide cross-section of the population (ufologists as a sub-group are not large enough to ensure sales); b) Offers at least potential overseas sales by not being too restrictive...; c) Has a new angle...

"While I do not think it is necessary to sacrifice oneself entirely to the ideals of commercialism, and this is something which should never take precedence over honesty and integrity, UFO writing is to a large degree about compromise. Saying what you feel has to be said, but in a way which does not infringe too far the public desire to hear something else. I believe there is such a compromise, and in the long term the dividends will arrive...

"I found this out when working with Neville Spearman... The book for them,

which covers the Oakenholt CE4 case... had to be re-written substantially to satisfy what they wanted, as opposed to what I wanted...

"I am afraid that to survive as a UFO author in this day and age one has to accept that one plays to an audience which needs entertaining, but this can (with care) be combined with good ufology..."

Jenny Randles is probably the only full time 'UFO author' we have in this country, so her analysis of the dilemmas that such a species faces have to be taken seriously. But it also raises the important question as to what function a 'full-time UFO author' serves. The 're-writings and compromises' involved in this pursuit hardly suggest that the cause of 'pure research' is being served, and yet if we see it just as a job to pay the bills (not a dishonourable aim by any means) it is a singularly poorly rewarded one, as Jenny herself admits.

It is presumably because of this that most UFO writers earn an honest crust in some workaday pursuit as computer consultants, lecturers, librarians, astronomers, journalists and so forth, taking what extra comes from their work with an appreciative smile. Although presumably trying to write in an interesting and entertaining style, they are not beholden

Continued on page 16

Why have all the UFOs gone?

PETER ROGERSON

Since the distribution in May, 1978 of the film Close Encounters of the Third Kind the UFO experience has steadily declined. At the beginning of 1981, interest in the subject seemed to be at an all-time low. This appears to be something more than just another case of post-Condon blues, but part of a more profound change in the social climate

Until recently it was widely held, (by your contributor amongst others) that UFO beliefs were likely to grow out of crisis, yet at a time of great international tension the UFO myth seems suddenly irrelevant. Why is this? In order to try to answer this question, I have found it necessary to examine in some detail the sources of UFO belief.

Jerome Clark has suggested, in private correspondence, that perhaps the UFO experience was a phenomenon of the "good times", when people had the psychological leisure to worry about matters of ultimate concern instead of worrying about the future of their paypackets. Taken at its face value, this view seems implausible, for it is surely in times of great crisis that people's attention is drawn to matters of 'ultimate concern'. As the saying goes, "there are no atheists in foxholes". Perhaps it is the kind of crisis which determines the level of popular interest in ufology and other related fields. For example in the United States the mid-70's was marked by a time of improving

international relations, accompanied by a rapid flux in internal values. Today that situation is completely reversed.

Therefore I have decided to examine changing popular perceptions of the UFO experience in relation to the social climate of the times, with special emphasis on the United States and Britain. Once again I shall use the terms 'flying saucer mythology' to denote the belief systems supporting contactees and space-brothers, and the 'UFO mythology' to denote the military/scientific/hostile UFO belief systems.

One striking factor which arises in the early years is that the contactees never obtained the sort of intellectual support and appeal in the United States or France, that they did in Britain. Can we find an answer for this?

An analysis of some popular British writers on the subject from 1953 to 1959, and of Editorials in Flying Saucer Review from 1956 to 1963, shows that the support for the 'flying saucer mythology' tended to come from traditional, humanistic 'classics men', who felt that their spiritual, intellectual and social positions were under threat from the rising generation of grammar school and red-brick university trained scientists and technologists. Thus Arthur Constance saw in the growth of technical education, a surrender to the 'materialistic values' of communism (1). The flying saucer was seen as an antidote to over-rapid social change. As an example, Gavin Gibbons (2) saw the 'fly-

4
ing saucers' in an essentially millenarian light. They would land near Stafford, and introduce the post-historic age of the utopian simple life. It would be "comparable with our village life, with an elder person of wisdom ruling with a benevolent rod of power". The new age would be a true paradise in which "minds would be cleansed of all evil, good would prevail, and universal love predominate (2).

Of these writers, Waveney Girvan (3) was probably the most able. Reared in the traditions of Scots Calvinist dissent, he was able to use the traditional language of the anti-papist nonconformist, and combine it with the public school distrust of the 'swot', to pour invective against the new priesthood of 'Sir Oracle' scientists. His most popular editorial technique at Flying Saucer Review, was basically to mobilise popular resentment towards 'experts', then channel it against the scientific community and thus create a broad populist appeal, in which the 'common sense' of the proverbial man on the Clapham omnibus, was contrasted with the pretensions of experts ('moral crusaders' against sociologists, psychologists, and penal refermers use the same technique)

In the United States, the rival 'UFO' myth predominated. Though the 'contactees' were American, there was little anti-scientific intellectual tradition to which they could turn, in a culture in which the inventor at least, had a higher status than say the professor of Latin. The contactees drew their audience primarily from the 'metaphysical subculture' of 'new thought' and mind cure (3,4). Indeed, one cult, Guy Ballard's I AM cult (see 5 for details) provided the most important source of recruitment. Their ideology never rose much beyond the typical 'new age' economics - known to their critics as 'funny money' schemes - a vague anti-bomb sentiment, and a populist anti-intellectualism -- for a history of which see Richard Hofstadter's Anti-intellectualism in American Life, Cape, 1964)

In many ways the voice of the dominant UFO myth was the voice of Donal Keyhoe. His books (6), with their tales of aerial dog-fights, ashen faced officials, and nameless secrets combined the elements of both war story and spy story. Keyhoe's UFOs were always neutral at best, at worst, downright hostile. In one sense Keyhoe's fears echoed those of the United States Air Force, where the UFOs were seen as somebody or something secret weapon (7). Particularly in parts of Keyhoe's second book, it becomes difficult to distinguish the 'alien' threat from the 'Russian threat'. Indeed, one can make a comparison between Keyhoe and Senator Joseph McCarthy. They both had a simple message: the boys in Washington are withholding from

the American public truth about the menace.

However it should be noted that while McCarthy saw the threat as primarily internal (it is proverbial that he was never very concerned about the actual physical threat from Russia), Keyhoe Keyhoe projected it as super-external. Furthermore, by attacking Air Force censorship, he was able to attract liberals such as Richard Hall (who never seems to have really 'belonged' in a NICAP whose governing body at times read like a Who's Who of the military-industrial complex) who were concerned about civil liberties, and to generate a wide appeal among people who had an ingrained distrust of the 'Washington Establishment'.

Unlike the 'saucer' myth, the UFO myth did not go in for scientist baiting in a big way. Its source of grass-roots appeal is not very well documented. The constant undertone of hostile spaceships does not suggest that any great feeling of being supporters of a new science was being built up, though the growth of an optimistic technological milieu and popular interest may well have been contributing factors. But one suspects that a lot of UFO buffs of the 50's were mainly interested in a good yarn.

At the grass-roots level, as the decade wore on, the 'UFO' and 'saucer' myths tended to merge, and a third myth can now be distinguished, that of the space people who were prepared to provide the key to health and happiness, but who were being opposed by the entrenched 'powers that be' - here one notes the similarity to Third World cargo-cults. Vallee's study of American UFO groups in 1965/6 (published in Anatomy of a Phenomenon) shows how widespread and convoluted conspiracy theories had become amongst both ufologists and 'saucerites'.

A very good case could be made out that in the early 1950's the UFO might have several symbolic roles, promising a salvation from celestial realms, for American saucerites; symbolising an ill-defined menace to American ufologists; or, for British saucerites promising resistance to secularisation social change. The evidence from the French experience suggests that the 'UFO' already was becoming a symbol of the transforming power of technological progress.

Yet these myths played no part in such major crises as Berlin or Cuba in the early 1960's, or the rising racial tension, and political polarisation in the USA. While no really conclusive answer to this conundrum is possible, it is permissible to make a few guesses. For example, the Berlin and Cuba Crises were too sudden for any salvationist myth to develop, and they were followed by the defusing effects of the Test Ban Treaty. Perhaps the UFO/saucer myths had gone off the boil since 1957, and those most attracted to ufology and saucerism were increas-

5
ingly being caught up in the enthusiasm for space travel and the progressive ideology of the Kennedy era. I suspect that UFO myths were already no longer capable of dealing with sudden acute crises.

For the United States, the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963 marked the beginning of a period of massive instability and social change. This included changes in social mores, the Vietnam War, the explosive racial crises, the rise and fall of new scientific myths, and the coming of the space age into the centre of consciousness. Many of these factors influenced other western nations. In the United Kingdom, for example social change was accompanied by loss of Empire.

The return of the UFO in 1964 (Socorro in the US, Warminster in England), was in a period of major public interest in the space race, and intense speculation about extra-terrestrial life. Now for the first time the idea of the ETH as a scientific concept, as presented for example in the writings of James Macdonald (50) and Jacques Vallee (8), began to move towards the centre of the stage.

This new 'scientific' ETH mirrored the values of the age of the planner, the "white heat of the technological revolution", and the 'Great Society', in a resurgence of the kind of optimistic scientism which had been prominent in the 1930's. The ethos of the 'nuts and bolts' ETH was that of the limitless potential of the engineer. This ethos had an especial appeal in the US, where it could be seen as a re-statement of the old American cult of the practical inventor, as against the theorist and intellectual.

This 'scientific ufology' quickly dispensed with the contactees overt salvationist message, but it certainly contained its own covert message that there was a glorious technological utopia; that someone in the cosmos had survived the perils of the immediate future, and that humanity could follow suit. The role of the scientist as engineer manipulator and sole deliverer of progress, was coupled with a disdain for all metaphysics and religion. The future was to lie in the 'secular city' (according to the theologian Harvey Cox), probably under a glass bubble on Mars.

Within a couple of years a disenchantment with this technological dream had set in. As conflicts mounted the image of the 'hostile UFO' re-emerged with renewed vigour. At first the threat was seen in extremely concrete terms, and books with titles like 'Flying Saucer Menace' (10) and 'Flying Saucers are Hostile' (11) portrayed the ET equivalent of the massive firepower being used in Vietnam.

Rising tensions in the ghettos seemed to be bringing the war home, and the new "UFO mythology" projected the hostility not

against the military targets of the 50's, but against civilian communities. The image of the flap area, such as Exeter (12), or Point Pleasant (13) was that of a community under siege.

The image of the besieger was to suffer a gradual 'desecularisation' and become more diffuse as it became more supernatural. In the writings of John Keel (13-16), we see the image of the UFO as a force of universal negation achieve an eloquent expression.

Keel's themes of mysterious open-ended conspiracies, plots and subversion attracted a growing number of people who were alienated from a society which to be beyond control. His vision of an implacable, perversely hostile universe against which humanity was powerless, and of all religious and secular ideologies as 'lies' aimed to manipulate people, echoed Alfred de Vigny's nightmare of the 'God who is as unjust as he is omnipotent' (quoted in 17). It was the cry of the disillusioned and cynical who had seen through the masks of society's gods.

Keel's writings illustrate perfectly what I said earlier about the menace coming home. Keel's omnipresent "elementals" are a far more subtle and terrifying threat than Steiger or Writenour's nasty metallic space ships. In his portraits of small towns under siege by nameless forces he achieves a remarkable metaphor of the traditional Middle America besieged by a world it can no longer understand, and in which values once taken for granted, are crumbling.

The sense of man's impotence before an alien and inhuman society was neatly summed up in the story of Betty and Barney Hill in 1966, which was to set a long fuse for the explosion of abduction stories which were to start coming in from 1973 onwards.

Though the growth of the space industry assisted the development of the ETH, it may well have also contributed to its downfall. It is significant that the great disillusionment with the ETH coincided with the Apollo moon shots. This was certainly true for the present writer, for once I had seen those splendid photographs of the Earth from Apollo 8, I was never again able to believe in nuts and bolts spaceships visiting the Earth from other planets. Furthermore for many people the Moon shots were regarded as increasingly irrelevant. The "counter culture" which grew up in the mid 1960's viewed science increasingly as a hostile and dehumanising activity. This romantic backlash was to renew the vision of the UFO as a transcendent 'anti-scientific' symbol (18).

This new humanism developed around very different social groups than had the 'saucer cult' of the 1950's. It was intimately connected with the drug culture and the underground press. It became the fashion for pop stars and their circle to go on skywatches,

and possess UFO detectors. John Michell, regarded by many in the late 60's as a guru of the new romantics, identified the UFO with Fairyland, the Holy Grail, and a primal paradise of the imagination (19). Jacques Vallee, disillusioned with 'big science', turned to folklore, "where gentle folks and graceful fairies dance and lament the coarse world below" (20). The depths of hostility which could now be marshalled against technology, and the UFO as a technological symbol, can be seen in the following comment by John Rimmer:

"...the extra-terrestrial hypothesis has never appealed to me because it is so unattractively mechanical... The thought of great hulking lumps of metalware clattering and screeching, dropping oil all over the landscape, jettisoning slag or crashing down to their doom in flames and clouds of polluting smoke, is such an appalling one that my mind tries desperately to resist it".

Significantly, that passage was written in an article entitled "The UFO is Alive and Living in Fairyland", published in MUF0B in 1970.

But of course Fairyland was by no means just a place of 'gentle fairies'. It also had its hidden menace, and was a place where nothing was what it seemed. In this very ambiguity of Fairyland/Magonia, both romantics and those who saw the UFO as a source of fear could find common ground in a new folklore (or perhaps a very old folklore, given a new gloss). Both sides could be attracted to the notion that Magonia was in our midst; that UFOs could mimic everyday objects such as motor cars, or that the mystery of the cosmos might be revealed in a leaf blown in the wind. These ideas suggest a 'terrible' and transcendent quality behind the phenomena of everyday life, and suggest that indeed there was an "eternity in a grain of sand". It is perhaps significant that such feelings about everyday objects are reported by those who have taken psychedelic drugs, or who have experienced acute schizophrenic breakdowns. Whether one reacted to this revelation with awe or paranoia depended much on temperament and conditioning (as indeed with reactions to psychedelic drugs).

Into this heady brew was thrown a further, and potentially far more explosive, ingredient - a renewed millennial speculation. The myth of the 'Age of Aquarius' was nothing less than the reappearance of the spectre which had haunted Western Christendom since the thirteenth century, that of Joachim de Fiore's Third Age, or "Age of the Holy Ghost" (21), in which the Holy Spirit would descend on all, both Church and State would vanish, and universal peace reigns under the 'Everlasting Gospel'. Among the more recent claimed manifestations of this

belief system have been Hitler's "Thousand-Year Reich", and Marx's "Classless Society".

The identification of this "Third Age" with the astrological 'Age of Aquarius' appears to have originated during the Renaissance, and featured in the writings of Theosophists and other nineteenth and twentieth century 'new age writers'. It was probably pushed into public consciousness by the American Catholic 'seeress' Jeanne Dixon, who proclaimed that the Age of Aquarius will be inaugurated by a new world leader, born in the Middle East in 1962, who would establish universal peace. The following year the influential folk-singer Bob Dylan proclaimed "the times, they are a-changing" in a song rich in traditional millenarian imagery.

During the next twenty years, the character of this New Age was to undergo successive metamorphoses. In rough order, these were:

- a) A belief in radical but 'normal' political activity - the reformist phase. (Eg the civil rights movement in the United States, the 'Great Society')
- b) A belief in radical, 'non-normal' forms of political activity which would alter the entire order of things. For example, the various student movements of the sixties.
- c) A belief in the violent, revolutionary overthrow of all things, and the creation of a new world order by the direct action of a 'saving remnant' (Black Panthers, Baader-Meinhof, some cults).
- d) A belief that society could only become changed by a revolutionary change in the nature of individual consciousness, leading to a new 'transcendental' politics. (Yippies, certain types of Black Power, feminism, the early drug-culture, communes).
- e) A belief that the new order could only be brought about by the direct transformation of individual consciousness, with any social change a welcome, but incidental, by-product (consciousness movement, humanistic psychology, the 'psi' revolution, some cults).
- f) A belief that society was doomed, and that a saving remnant must separate itself from the mainstream to survive (most cults, 'The Two').
- g) A belief that only the transformation of the individual mattered, and that traditional social values should not only be maintained but strengthened (the 'born-again' movement).

This progression suggests that the sacralisation of the millennial ideal grew in proportion to the failure of secular political activity. This drift into increasingly radical, but then quietistic responses can be seen in the progress of sectaries in the English Civil War, Commonwealth, and after the Restoration.

It was in the atmosphere of the early Age of Aquarius, at about position d), that

Jerome Clark launched what might be called the manifesto of the 'New Ufology':

"We are entering a weird, wonderful, terrifying age. The world we have always known is changing rapidly, almost inexplicably, heading towards either final chaos or the birth of a new order. Humanity has discovered a new consciousness of itself in the universe... if you don't believe it, check your local bookstore's supply of works on UFOs, psychic phenomena, witchcraft and other borderline fields; watch out how fast it is sold out. Magic, it is said, is being reborn... Lifestyles change with fashions... powerful drugs like LSD, whose workings science is at a loss to explain, change those who take them in mysterious ways they can scarcely perceive. Men everywhere are searching for new gods, find them, and the pace of change accelerates" (22).

Clark proclaimed that involvement in the hippy subculture was vital to "begin to understand the fundamental earth-shaking changes our planet is going through" (23).

This type of linking of parapsychology and ufology with their youth subculture led to extremely hostile reactions, and was destined to produce a fundamental shift towards science on the part of many supporters of the status-quo.

As we saw previously, many conservative thinkers had seen science as a threat to the social order, and it had become routine for parapsychologists to appeal to fundamental social values in opposition to materialism. The extreme right-wing psychologist William McDougall made a typical comment, shortly after the First World War:

"Unless psychical research... can discover facts incompatible with materialism, materialism will continue to spread... No other power can stop it; revealed religion and metaphysical philosophy are equally helpless before the advancing tide. And if that tide continues to rise and advance as it is doing now, all the signs point to the view that it will be a destroying tide, that will sweep away all the hard won gains of humanity, all the moral traditions built up by the efforts of countless generations for the increase of truth, justice and charity" (24).

McDougall's comments were supported by the English psychical researcher, G. N. M. Tyrrell, who saw in psychical research an antidote to the collectivism of Communism and Fascism "by showing the centre of importance lies in the individual and not in the mass", and to the loneliness of the individual in the crowd (25). McDougall's own pupil, the pioneer parapsychologist Joseph B. Rhine saw his work in psi as helping to defend 'American Values' against atheistic Communism (26), a sentiment strongly echoed by science writer Henry Pierce (27) as late as 1970.

However, the increasing identification of ESP with the 'occult' and the drug and youth subcultures led to a definition of the 'rational' as a central value under attack from a new antinomianism. In a comment which makes almost a complete mirror image of that of McDougall, Nathan Adler argued

"(The term psychedelic) reinforces the science fiction fantasies about mind expansion, re-opens the gate to the tide of superstitions and occult, obscurantist mystification that constantly surges against the dykes of rationalism that were slowly built up and won..." (28)

In such emotional reactions as these of McDougall and Adler, there is more than a hint of the battle between the "cosmos" built up by some promethian effort, and the chaos outside. The 'Cosmos' here refers to the central value systems of the "social universe". It is also noteworthy that Freud once referred to the occult as a black tide of mud, and anti-pornography campaigners refer to tides of filth. The sea is clearly an image of wild nature, untamed and untamable by man and his society, and always threatening to sweep it away.

It is from such a perspective that one should evaluate the Condon enquiry (1969). In his conclusions, and later outbursts, especially about schoolchildren obtaining credits for reading UFO books, or in his opposition to any 'respectable' scientific discussion of the subject, Condon was ritually re-affirming traditional social and educational values against a whole range of innovations and changes.

Indeed, the enquiry itself, like the Air Force Project Blue Book, had important ritual functions in defining the boundaries of the cultural universe. The 'cosmos' was re-affirmed, almost in the manner of the parent, who, in calming the night fears of their child, is calming their their own doubts and fears, and reassuring themselves of the ultimate orderliness of the world.

And surely much horror fiction depends for its power on the failure of this reassurance, on the eclipse of the world of daylight reason and common-sense, and the shocking realisation that all is not right with the world. Much the same feeling seems to emerge in UFO experience after UFO experience. In some sense we may argue that it was the very strain placed on the delicate fabric of 'consensus reality' by that social technological and political change, which opened up the rents that let in the sense of the mysterium tremendum in the heart of the ordinary.

The ufologists were amongst those who had to cope with this sense of the abyss, and the principia device that they adopted was a bureaucratisation of their own procedures. Compared with the freebooting days

of the 1960's, when UFO groups rose and fell in marvellous disarray, the 1970's were to see a centralisation of activity and an almost obsessive concern with bureaucracy and paperwork. This ufology was often self-consciously respectable. On the surface its aim was to win friends and influence people. But from my own observations at UFO conferences there is an almost frantic desire to keep to the trivial, and mention the actual topic of enquiry as little as possible. I get the feeling of an at least unconscious desire to exorcise possible pectres. And the failure, when mythic material (often quite out of context) comes pouring through adds its own testimony to this feeling.

By 1973 the stage had been set for a re-emergence of the UFO myth, which had been dormant for the first couple of years of the new decade. The underground growth of ecstatic religious movements, the popularisation of 'extraterrestrial euhemism' by von Däniken, and increasing concern over ecology and the mishandling of science were important new ingredients.

By 1973 these underground growths were to grow very public, with The Exorcist, Uri Geller, and UFOs emerging in short order.

The UFO wave of 1973 developed in a country which had suffered a de-facto military defeat, and was in the throes of an investigation that was revealing that its chief executive was a crook. The national morale was low, and by autumn it was clear that one spark could set of the entire UFO mythology again. There were, probably, two very different sparks - the millenarian speculation surrounding the coming of the comet Kohoutek, and the Yom Kippur War with its shattering effect on Western economies.

The dominant motif in this reincarnated ufology was to be the abduction, which was to prove an excellent symbol of the feeling of being 'seized' by an increasingly remote and alien world which many people feared.

At the heart of the abduction syndrome there seemed to be the ambiguity of the child's-eye view of the doctor as both a healer and mutilator. John Hind, has argued that the doctor is the main authoritative, scientific figure that the average person is likely to have encountered, and on to whom general fears of science could be projected. Furthermore, the abduction experience was to emerge at a time of public concern over several aspects of medicine - opposition to what were seen as mechanical and coldly clinical procedures, concern over radical techniques such as heart-transplants, and much scientific and quasi-scientific speculation about the future course of medical manipulation.

One of the other strands of the renewed ufology contained the seeds of an even more dehumanising perspective.

Euhism is basically the viewing of myth

and religion as distorted history. It was employed by Christian writers against the Greek and Roman traditional religions. There has always been a strongly historical and 'factual' bias in Christianity, and the growth of the 'cult of the fact' from the nineteenth century onwards, accelerated it. Thus if religious beliefs are beliefs about 'matters of ultimate value', and only facts are accorded value, then it follows that the only valid religious truths are those about 'facts'. Hence there has been a powerful stream in Fundamentalism (mainly in America) which is concerned to regard the Bible as a scientific textbook. To do this meant that some fundamentalists had to resort to more and more drastic rationalisations.

Writers sought to defend both Catholic (29) and Protestant (30) theology through recourse to 'extraterrestrial euhemism'. But while the theological dogmas were preserved at least as verbal formulae, much of the spiritual quality was drained away, and in the hands of popular writers like Jessup (31) and Blumrich (32) it had to all intents and purposes totally disappeared. In preserving the Biblical miracles as 'facts', their message had been lost.

This process was soon generalised and completely secularised in the mass of extraterrestrial euhemist 'ancient - astronaut' literature. This, by rejecting all 'non-scientific' values, and by denying human creativity, presented a view of humanity as a passive object manipulated by outside forces. A view which was aided by the fact that many people did feel just this way.

There were other very important strands to extraterrestrial euhemism: the rejection of mankind's connection to the animal world so strongly shared by the creationists, or an echo of mankind as 'a stranger in a strange land', a spark of divinity imprisoned in gross matter; the latent millennial appeal of the promise that the 'gods' might return; and von Däniken's populist appeal against professional archaeologists.

Whatever the cause of the popularity of the ancient astronaut myth, it ultimately reduced humanity to the level of someone's or something's experiment. A process which reached its nadir in the case of Dione (33) who saw mankind as the experimental object of an entirely arbitrary super-technological deity.

This philosophy was readily applied to contemporary events. The Judeo-Christian tradition has always regarded history as an arena in which God's providences might be worked out. Prodiges and marvels had been regarded for generations as 'Divine Providences', so it was hardly surprising that the marvels of contemporary folklore should be regarded as the providential workings - out in history of the will of God the Behaviorist.

In his post-Watergate concept of the 'control system', Vallee (34) was in fact merging, with striking effect, the notion of a divine providence behind history, with popular feelings of manipulation and loss of autonomy. There was now a UFO mythology which saw humanity as being both created and maintained as an 'experiment' by superhuman forces which might intervene in individual human lives in an arbitrary fashion. Behind all this lay a fear of being swept away by a society changing out of recognition.

The growth of possession beliefs, stimulated by the Exorcist and its numerous copycats, was probably likewise generated by a profound fear of social change. Both fundamentalist Christians and fundamentalist Rationalists alike felt threatened by these changes in social values. Possession beliefs were especially strong in many of the rapidly rising fundamentalist churches, which sought both to offer the stoutest defense of the eroding traditional values, and to offer an ecstatic religion in a Westernised format. Charismatic Christianity, with its traditions of glossolalia, demon exorcism and other 'gifts of the spirit', offers a culturally reaffirmative variety of shamanic experience, which could now set itself up against the 'new religions'.

By invoking demonic possession, fundamentalists were able to explain why youth, for example, no longer adhered to the traditional value systems of a given culture. That the possessee was often a child is a good clue to suchlike motivations.

Christian fundamentalists were quick to use the revived belief in demons to denounce UFOs as demonic forces (35,36). It is fairly clear that what they were 'really' denouncing was the worship of secular technological progress. What was demonic about UFOs, was that they were being (or had been) used by supporters of the ETH to argue for the inevitability of progress and for the possibilities of moral self-help on a cosmic scale and confirming a technological world view.

But the perception of UFOs as demonic was also well established within ufology. For many socially conservative ufologists, UFOs were symbolic agencies of social change which were being increasingly blamed for a variety of social ills. This was certainly true amongst that very same group of British ufologists who in the 1950's had hailed the flying saucers as the antidote to materialism; and allowed them to denounce the whole range of 'folk devils and moral panics' (to borrow Stanley Cohen's book title) of the British middle class as the result of this demonic activity.

John Cleary-Baker's comments on 'alien influences... at work in our society, quoted already in this journal by Roger Sandell, is

typical of this attitude. It is at this time that Cleary-Baker is also denouncing those who tried to introduce an overtly 'scientific' emphasis into the work of BUFORA as 'white-coated godlings of the laboratory'.

Almost invariably such beliefs in demonic UFOs are associated with a millenarian current. Demons are at work in the world, because the end is near, and social and cosmic disintegration awaits. Almost all the concerns of the modern UFO mythology are to be found in the articles of the British UFO writer Gordon Creighton: the sense of the world out of control, of loss of autonomy, the millennial appeal, and the sense of being 'at Armageddon and in the Army of the Lord', every bit as strong as that of a 1st Century Christian or 17th century 5th Monarchist. The passage quoted below presents the social dimensions of the 'demonic UFO' theory in its starkest form.

"...For all too long has the naked ape harkened to the promptings of the demonic playmates against which every true prophet and seer... has warned. If disaster is now to be avoided, we have very, very little time...

"Where there are demons...and they are already here in immense strength...then it is certain that there could be, and perhaps will be when the crunch comes, angels too.."

"Time is running out fast. All the indications - economic, social, geographic, geological, scientific - are that we are now in an exponential situation and that before the close of this century cataclysmic and apocalyptic events will rend the planet...

"As the waves of senseless, irrational violence (telepathically induced?), rise higher and higher on the earth, soon to engulf every country, and as the signs of moral and spiritual decay multiply, who can doubt that certain of the 'UFO entities' have a hand in the wrecking... If individuals or groups can be controlled, so too can governments and whole nations.

"A truly marvellous wrecking job! A truly marvellous wrecking job. Even the Christian churches (along with every human organisation, political, social, scientific, economic) have been deeply infiltrated" (37) (Emphasis in original)

In this passage the impact of "future shock" is seen at its starkest, as is the utility of the demon hypothesis to anatomise change and to express middle-class fears. And in case that passage makes you laugh, remember that the only thing which would make many of the writer's social class think him unbalanced is his choice of scapegoats. Substitute Communists, Jews, or any other scapegoat for 'demons', and is it all that different from the cries of newspaper leader columns?

But if times of social change are a

Continued on page 13

Notes & Quotes

You may have noticed that John Harney was described in the heading to his article in the last issue as "John Harney BA". Space limitations precluded adding our congratulations to him on obtaining his degree from the Open University. We are delighted to do so now!

By kind invitation of the organisers, MAGONIA will be present at the 'Festival of Creative Living' to be held at Hove Town Hall on August 28th and 29th (Bank Holiday Weekend). Besides having a stand at which several of the Editorial Panel hope to put in an appearance (and at which back-issues, a MAGONIA 'special' and other publications will be on sale), editor John Rimmer will be giving a talk 'UFOs; the inside story' at 3.45pm on Saturday 29th.

Reports from regular visitors of the various 'New Age' festivals indicate that the Hove events have a particularly friendly atmosphere and have not developed into the exploitive events that some others have. For some reason MAGONIA subscribers are particularly thick on the ground in the Sussex area, and we look forward to meeting some of you at this Festival.

Opening times are 1 am to 9pm Saturday, and 10am to 4pm Sunday. Admission is 75p, children 35p. Full programmes will be available from 'The Portland Centre', 16 Preston St., Brighton, BN1 2HN, for a stamped, addressed foolscap envelope plus 20p.

The Australian Centre for UFO Studies has published an analysis of Australian reports for 1979. This is one of a most valuable series of catalogues which has been produced by ACUFOS. Part 1 is a catalogue of fifteen close encounters, compiled by Keith Basterfield, with Part 2 a statistical analysis by David Seargent. It is highly recommended. Available free from the Centre at PO Box 546, Gosford, NSW, Australia 2250 - please send a 20 x 10 cm addressed envelope with at least two international reply coupons for surface postage.

One of Major Donald Keyhoe's UFO books of the fifties was entitled The Flying Saucer Conspiracy. In this book Keyhoe argued that the United States government was deliberately suppressing information, an idea which has continued to appeal to ufologists ever since.

But, if one accepted the idea of an official UFO cover-up, what was the motive? Many ufologist felt that the answer lay in bureaucratic mistrust of the public, and fear of possible panic if it was 'revealed' that extraterrestrial beings were surveying and landing on this planet. However, there were those prepared to look for more sinister explanations. For example, George Hunt Williamson, the American contactee, writing in Flying Saucer Review, saw the UFO 'cover up' in terms of the conspiracy theories examined in the first part of this article:

... there are certain very powerful interests (interests that really control the world, its people, and what they think and do) in the world that know that extraterrestrial recognition means extraterrestrial allegiance ... They feel that to officially recognise UFOs means the end of their power and control over people, wars to aid the economic situation, (sic) and the loss of industry (vital to their continuance). In short is keeping you from knowing the TRUTH. This is the conspiracy, and it is the plot of International Banking to keep you ignorant, a plot that is not new to our times, but is as old as Earth and has existed in all ages and civilisations. (1)

Hunt Williamson's fellow-contactee George Adamski voiced similar opinions. In his final book, Flying Saucer Farewell, he describes his audience with Queen Juliana of the Netherlands (who frequently embarrassed the Dutch government by extending hospitality to dubious occultists), and claims that she told him that the truth about UFOs was being suppressed by a powerful group of 'International Bankers', who feared that UFOs, with their futuristic energy sources, represented a threat to their power, which was based on their monopoly of natural resources. Curiously Queen Juliana is the wife of Prince Bernhard, a founder of the Bilderberg Group. This is a semi-secret club for top European and US politicians and financiers which features prominently in many conspiracy theories (29).

Similar denunciations of International Bankers and other world conspiracies can be found elsewhere in UFO cultist literature of the fifties and sixties. One of the most

public attention after its foundation, by the late forties it had shrunk to a tiny cult, increasingly influenced by the beginnings of UFO cultism. In 1951, Bell told his followers that the Sponsors had abandoned hope of defeating the Hidden Rulers, but that by secret technology they had discovered an uncorrupted Earthlike planet, in another dimension, to which they could transfer all true believers at the instant of their death.

For Bell, as for Adamski and George Hunt Williamson, the existence of benevolent extraterrestrials with miraculous technology offered a possible escape from the power of evil conspirators. But for others there were more sinister possibilities; if the UFOs themselves were part of the conspiracy.

From the first, many cultists had been convinced of the malevolence of the UFO occupants. Richard Shaver, a worker in a car factory in Pennsylvania, had claimed in 1944 to have knowledge of the existence of the Dero, a race of malevolent subterraneans who were capable of warping the minds of humans by complex mind-control technology. Shaver was quick to link the first UFO sightings with his Dero, as was his publisher, Ray Palmer.

From the nineteen-fifties to the present, UFO lore has told of the notorious 'Men in Black', malign figures, apparently human, but in reality alien, spreading fear and engaged in some unfathomable plan. Not surprisingly these ideas of evil interference in human affairs took on a political dimension for some writers. The first person to have made the link seems to have been Morris K Jessup, who, in his book The Case for the UFOs, asks:

Have space people taken over the Red Empire? The secrets of ancient flight and levitation... have been preserved in the monasteries of the Himalayas. Can there be a direct relationship, between this facts and Russian anxiety to capture and control these mountain fastnesses?

Some cultists were prepared to expand these ideas into even more detailed scenarios. One such American cult of the late 1960's, the Jaredite Church, claimed that the famous 'Sons of God', described as intermarrying with human women in Genesis, were robots created by Satan, a scientist from a distant solar-system. Ever since, their descendants have constituted 'The Watchers', who have been doing the work of Satan. Their numbers have included Christian persecuting Roman emperors, mediaeval inquisitors, and, in our own time, Marshal Tito, Al Capone, Kosygin and, alarmingly for social democrats, Lord George-Brown. In England, The Watchers featured in the writ-



FROM CONSPIRATORS TO CONTACTEES Roger Sandell

Part 2 The UFO Connection

interesting links between conspiracy theorising, ufology, and occultism is the case of Mankind United (3).

This organisation was founded in 1974 by Arthur Bell, a Californian businessman. Bel, claimed that wars, financial crises, and human misery in general, were the work of the Hidden Rulers, a centuries old cabal of financiers, aiming at world dictatorship. Bell described the plans of the Hidden Rulers for their future dictatorship in detail: they included pyramid-shaped cities, futuristic instruments of torture, and vast harems for the Rulers. However, proclaimed Bell, another group of wealthy men, this time benevolent, had organised to defeat the Rulers, and usher in an age of universal prosperity. These people were Mankind United's secret Sponsors. When the organisation reached 2000,000,000 members, they would reveal themselves, and their plans to the world.

Although this group attracted some

ings of the early sixties contactee, Derek Sampson who also founded an anti-semitic fringe party, The National Reform Movement

An even more extraordinary variant on the UFO conspiracy idea was propounded by a 1970's American Cultist, Philip Argyle-Stuart, in his surprisingly named publication, The High IQ Bulletin:

My theory is that an extremely devilish imposed overcrust was added to the Khazar (i.e. Jewish (4)) population, consisting of humanoid who arrived by flying saucer from the planet Vulcan, which I assume not to be in intra Mercurial orbit round the Sun, but in Earth's orbit...behind the Sun forever out of sight...

Likewise for the Gothic, Faustian Western culture. The previously inert and purposeless migrating population streams known as Franks, Goths, Angles Saxons, Danes, Swabians, Alemni, Lombards, Vandals and Vikings suddenly had an over-crust added consisting of Norman-Martian-Varangians arriving from Saturn by way of Mars, in flying saucers.

After 1776 it (i.e. the Vulcanian Jewish conspiracy) used the Illuminati and Grand Order Masons. After 1815 it used the financial machinations of the House of Rothschild, after 1848, the Communist movement, and after 1895 the Zionist movement.

However, the link between ufology and conspiracy theorising is not confined to isolated cultist's. Gordon Creighton's articles in Flying Saucer Review frequently contain asides, hinting at the involvement of UFO entities in political conspiracy. In his introduction to the British edition of J C Bourret's The Crack in the Universe he writes:

As the human species and sub-species find themselves more and more beset by a host of intractable difficulties which could conceivable foreshadow our early departure from the scene, it becomes easier to perceive that maybe we men are not the masters here after all, and that our governments very likely know who does exercise that control. (GC's emphasis)

The late John Cleary-Baker, founder-editor of BUFORA Journal, expressed himself in similar terms:

When every allowance is made for such factors as pressure of population the strains and stresses of urban life and so on, there are elements in the social phenomena of today which seem to point directly to outside alien influences, constructive and destructive, in our society. Youth in partic-

ular appears to be a target for all sorts of forces and influences, probably not all terrestrial in origin (5)

John Keel has been even more explicit in ascribing to the UFO entities a plan for world domination, very similar to that alleged against the Jews in anti-semitic works such as the Protocols of Zion:

How would you go about the capture and enslavement of a whole planet The game has already commenced. It is being played on a global scale. Here's how it is being done: Step one, the economic situation must be controlled. This means that the currency, and more importantly, gold, must be manipulated. Step two, the press must be controlled. Step three, all communications must be controlled. Step four, armed forces must be diverted and drained - Vietnam. Step five, religious (moral) control must be usurped. Step six, anarchy must be introduced. Step seven, suppress or assassinate those leaders who show potential ability to control this mess. (6)

Keel goes on to suggest that having reduced the Earth to chaos by means of this programme, the UFO entities could land and pose as our benevolent saviours.

Keel's British disciples, the writers Antony Roberts and Geoff Guilbertson, are yet more explicit. In their book The Dark Gods (7) they draw heavily on the writings of the 1920's anti-semitic and conspiracy theorist Nesta H. Webster, and depict the Illuminati, the Bilderberg Group and the Trilateral Commission as agencies for the domination of humanity by evil entities.

To sum up: the ideas of conspiracy theorists seem to have exercised some appeal for believers in UFOs. Although sporadic, and strongest among the contactee fringe, the appeal is by no means confined to this area. This is surprising, considering the remoteness of conspiracy theory from the present political mainstream. The final part of this study will examine why this may be so.

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2. See: Robert Eringer, The Global Manipulators. Pentacle Books, Bristol, 1980
3. See: California Cult,
4. The Khazars were a mediaeval Caucasian tribe, who became converts to Judaism, and were absorbed into the Jewish population as a whole. Anti-semites often use the term to mean Jews in general.
5. BUFORA Journal, Spring-Summer 1971
6. BUFORA Journal, Summer 1969,

Continued from page 9

great threat for many in established positions, for others, on the margins, they are times of unparalleled promise. The weakening of the web of 'taken for granted reality', allows for a radical reaction against the essentially negative view of humanity, which seemed so much a feature of many western philosophies. For many, especially younger people, the alternatives seemed either to reduce mankind to an economic calculus, as in Marxism and Capitalism, denounce him as a depraved sinner, as did traditional religions, or, with much reductionist biology and behaviourism, reduce him to a lump of chemicals. The confusion of values in this wasteland permitted the emergence of a kind of radical, literalistic existentialism, which opened up the possibilities for the coming of the new superman.

This new philosophy was popularised and perhaps symbolised best by those two trickster figures of the early seventies, Carlos Castaneda (38) and Uri Geller (39). The two presented themselves as charismatic, almost shamanistic figures, able to bend the 'inflexible' laws of nature. Their appeal was obvious to a generation which, in reaction against the flower-power sixties, saw itself again imprisoned by social conventions, and the dull routine of everyday life.

Castaneda represented an echo of the myth of the noble savage and western speculation about the occult powers of faraway societies. Geller directed his alleged PK powers against the minutiae of a technical society (40). Both offered what might be characterised as an ultra-literalistic existentialism. The existentialists had proclaimed humanity to be 'absolutely free', and Castaneda and Geller were prepared to show how literal that freedom was.

The moral ambiguities surrounding both Castaneda (whose stories were an elaborate series of novels - or hoaxes, depending on how one looked at it) and Geller (who was widely regarded as a conjouror) probably enhanced their popularity rather than deterring interest: as befits the trickster who makes a buffoon out of the pompous.

If Castaneda made himself into a character in a novel, Geller - who in particular was destined to play an important pole in injecting the paranormal into ufology - did live his life like a character in a novel.

As a modern hero, Geller had some significant features besides his general moral ambiguity. The most important was the very ambiguity of that 'freedom' itself. For Geller, although he appeared to be the epitome of 'liberation' from the constraints of a fixed destiny, was himself being pressured by his mentor Puharich into taking up a charismatic, if not messianic, role. A role in which, furthermore, he was cast as the passive instrument of the very sort of man-

ipulative supertechnological god that he was popularly thought to be opposing. A 'god' in the form of the computer 'Hoova', whose essential message seemed to be that the ultimate secret of the cosmos was a meaningless and 'absurd' scientific formula. (41) Geller's 'freedom' could not save him from manipulation, nor could it allow him to perform any useful service; he argued, for example, that he was not competent to be a healer.

What Geller offered to ufology was a revival of the almost dormant 'flying saucer' myth, with the important change in emphasis that the 'saving message' was less a social than a personal one, as befitting the change in the climate of 'New Age' thought from the collective to the personal.

Despite the apocalyptic tone often adopted by the prophets of the saving power of psi and the consciousness revolution, it was often difficult to see if what was offered was anything more than salvation from the straitjackets of bourgeois convention, and even that might be muted. Indeed, many of the consciousness training techniques were little more than a re-vamping of the old metaphysical movements, with their 'power of positive thinking', aimed at improving one's ability in the capitalist rat-race.

Perhaps such judgements are harsh, for if nothing else, the whole range of consciousness movements did offer visions of human solidarity, and above all affirmed the intrinsic values of non-western cultures to a western audience. Such a message had a very poignant appeal to western societies, whose self-confidence had been bruised by loss of empire and military defeat. The west was to receive a dose of the missionary medicine it had dished out to the third world, and was not to like it.

The central theme of much of the 'New Age' movement was a re-statement of a mythology of hope. In its often naive optimism, its avoidance of the problems of evil and suffering, it was clearly the child of the metaphysical movement, and of the myth of the 'American Adam' (42).

Emerging from this fusion of ufology and parapsychology were the 'new ufologies' of Jerome Clark and Loren Coleman (43), and D Scott Rogo (44). These writers regarded the UFO experience as an essentially human affair, and ascribed Geller/Castaneda-like powers to humanity as a whole in order to do this. In this way they symbolically affirmed the autonomy of humanity and the primacy of human values. They asserted in effect that people were the masters of their own destiny and neither prisoners of impersonal (or even personal) transhuman forces, nor dependent on them for their survival. In Rogo's case this was presented in the starkest fashion and came very close to invoking the image of

the superman who was able to bend the universe to his will.

Clark and Coleman, on the other hand were presenting a far more sophisticated position. They were actually diagnosing what they saw as the 'human condition' of Western man. The overvaluation of technology and rationalism had led to a 'loss of balance', or to use a phrase of Carl Jung's 'a loss of soul'. Western humanity had become alienated from the 'collective unconscious', and a sense of the 'spiritual'. This could easily lead to a pendulum swing to a new irrationalism. "The collective unconscious, too long suppressed, will burst free, overwhelm the world, and usher in an era of madness, superstition and terror, with all its accoutrements; war, anarchy and fascism" (43). The collective unconscious here becomes a symbol of nature, and the old myth of the revenge of nature (or Dionysius) is clearly spelt out.

To avoid this perpetual pendulum swing from incredulity to credulity and back again Clark and Coleman believed that a 'modern myth' was needed, and believed that they had found it in ufology. In 1975 such a hope seemed quite plausible. After all, as this article has shown, the folklore had, in the past, effectively symbolised social anxieties, and it appeared to be effective in combining magical and scientific themes. Yet now, returning to the opening of this piece ufology is now silent in the United States and the United Kingdom.

One reason for the loss of power of the UFO myth lies in an increasing sophistication of ufology itself, and in society's response to its implications. The old ufological certainties have long disappeared with the credibility of many of its claims, and the old simplicities of 'flying saucer' and 'UFO' have become so ambiguous as to lose much of their power. By the very action of labeling ufology a 'modern myth', the new ufologists have in fact seriously impeded its possibilities of becoming just that.

Not only that, but some of the options which ufology presented are now almost ruled out. People no longer have faith in the saving power of modern technology; and the sheer moral ambiguity involved in 'the great white chief from Ashtar Command coming here to take things in hand' is much more evident in the post-colonial age.

Not only that, but the evidence seems to suggest that the UFO is no longer really capable of symbolising concrete and external threats. The new vague and ambiguous UFOs symbolise vague and ambiguous threats, primarily internal ones. If saviour from space don't add up now, neither do really concrete nasty aliens.

There has indeed been a shift back to a more concrete expression of the UFO myth.

For example, there seems to have been a move away from abduction stories and back to the stories of crashed saucers (45,46), as well as aircraft encounters such as the now famous New Zealand film. Yet the very fact that elements of the 'new ufology' soon began to creep into that story (47,48) shows how difficult it is to hold the line.

Furthermore, the identification of ufology with the consciousness movement aligned it with a philosophy which had failed to gain significant working-class support. It is very difficult to imagine the average Chelsea supporter being converted to John Day's creed of peace and vegetarianism; or support from and disadvantaged section of society (the number of black American ufologists can surely be counted on the fingers of one hand).

Indeed, perhaps one can see in the short-lived 'Age of Aquarius' the last swan song of the belief in progress. For myths of the 'new age on this world', from the mildest reformism to the most radical revolution, have faded. For instead of creating a bold new myth, the revolt against rationalism which Clark and Coleman feared and prophesied, has given a 'Frankenstein's monster'-like pseudo-life to traditional belief systems.

In the cacophony of rival intolerances whether the revival of Christian fundamentalism, or Islamic fundamentalism, or neo-Orthodox Judaism, re-Stalinified Communism, or even the stringent rationalism of a James Randi, one senses the fragile dream of world dialogue shattered, and the various strands of the human community, shell-shocked beyond endurance by social change, retreating in despair to their laagers, like some wounded beasts crawling back to their lairs to die.

And in this climate, it is interesting to note that there has been a growing scepticism about extra-terrestrial life (49) and of attempts to communicate with other forms of life, whether dolphins, chimpanzees, or extraterrestrials. Indeed, perhaps in these times a belief in the ETH would be somehow dangerous, making us too careless of our own survival. Maybe it is in a belief that human beings are the only mens by which the cosmos can become aware of its own existence, that humanity can become aware of its own unity and essential sacredness. And in such a myth of the One People, the Children of Olduvai, bound for the stars, will perhaps come the strength to survive and to realise that to die for Ronald Reagan, Leonid Brezhnev, or Margaret Thatcher would be a far greater madness than that shown by those who died for Jim Jones in the forests of Guyana.

((This article was written before the Editorial in FSR, 26, 5, p.1, and was thus not intended as a reply to that Editorial, but

some of the points raised here may well answer some of Bowen's arguments. I am also aware that shortage of space has meant that some of the most recent developments in UFO folklore have been skated over. I may well come back to these either in book reviews or a further article.))

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So we must conclude that there is as yet no room for the 'full-time UFO author', and the only answer wishing to write about UFOs and maintain their integrity must be to earn their living elsewhere, submitting their work to those publishers (and there are some, but they do not pay well) who will want it for what it is. Then they can accept royalty cheques with gratitude but not subservience! The alternative, for the honest soul, is likely to be a combination of poverty and endless agonising!

[illegible]

BOOKS

Reviewed by
Peter Rogerson

EXTRA

One of the first pieces I ever wrote for the old Merseyside UFO Bulletin was a

Stanton Friedman, Ray Stanford and Leo Sprinkle give their usual turns, Fred Merritt talks about UFOCAT, James Oberg sceptically dissects some astronaut UFO stories and UFO stories generated by rocket launches, and Richard C Niemtzw discusses medical injuries caused by close

This selection of papers from the June 1977 'Fate' conference on the UFO phenomenon gives an excellent introduction to the subject. The sections on the psychological and sociological aspects of ufology are especially recommended. These include Dave Stuppel on contactees; Jerome Clark on MIB; Alvin Lawson on imaginary abductions. The case for physical UFOs is ably put by Ted Phillips and James Harder. Perhaps the most impressive sections

are those on the symposia, where, contrary to the usual 'lowest common denominator' to which many public UFO conferences descend, one gets the impression of a group of intelligent, puzzled people, often holding very different views, rationally and politely discussing and debating. Here one gets the feeling that people are moving from set public positions.

There are pleasant surprises, such as Ray Palmer, in his last public appearance, engaging in an intellectual discussion of the relationship between science-fiction and the 1897 flap.

The editors of 'Fate' appear to have produced what none of the 'respectable' and 'scientific' UFO organisations ever have - a genuinely stimulating UFO conference, with well-produced proceedings, which makes a valuable contribution to the subject, for newcomer and seasoned ufologist alike.

Must we wait until 1987 for the next one?

COLLYNS, Robert. Prehistoric Germ Warfare? Star Books, £1.25. 1981.

Was there germ warfare in prehistoric times? Was the coelacanth introduced by aliens? Is there an Inca city on Mars? What's this funny ringing noise in my ears? How does stuff like this get published?

- R.S.

STORY, Ronald D. (ed.) The Encyclopaedia of UFOs. NEL, 1980. 440pp, bibliog., £12.95

Unlike many pop 'encyclopaedias' produced on a range of topics from automobiles to wildlife, this volume is clearly intended to be an authoritative reference book, and must therefore be judged by the rigorous standards by which any other encyclopaedia must be judged.

The criteria of judgement include:

1. Comprehensiveness - does it treat the broad range of its subject matter?
2. Authoritativeness - are the articles signed and are the contributors recognised authorities in the fields they discuss?
3. Bias - do the articles give varying points of view, or is the work biased towards any one country or religion, etc.
4. Up-to-dateness - do the articles give current information and views?
5. Arrangement - is the internal arrangement easy to follow, is it consistent, is there good indexing and cross-references?
6. Bibliographies - is the reader guided to useful sources of further information?

On examining the encyclopaedia under these headings a number of deficiencies emerge.

Comprehensiveness The coverage of general articles seems reasonable, but

there are some notable omissions. For example the entry 'Men in Black' is only a cross-reference to an article on the 'Bender Mystery', and has no general discussion of the problem. There are no entries for 'Magonia' (the 'place', not us) 'bedroom visitors', 'landings' ('landing traces' is just a cross-head to 'physical traces'. Broader topics receive a superior treatment, though a notable omission is any general article on photographic evidence. There are a number of double entries (e.g. Close Encounters of the Third Kind, and 'Occupants').

It is in the biographical section that the book comes really unstuck. Though the preface states that the criteria for entry is that the persons listed are those who are generally regarded within the UFO field as the most notable personalities, the actual criterion in most cases seems to be being a contributor to the encyclopaedia. Most notably, several prominent British ufologists are missed - Bowen, Creighton, Gibbs Smith, the only BUFORA figures mentioned are Stuart Campbell and Norman Oliver. On Several entries are for people who seem to have only a marginal connection with the subject. One of the reasons for this confusion seems to be that there was no logical criteria thought out in advance.

The selection of '100 best cases' is capricious, many appear to have been selected because articles on them were readily to hand in the files of APRO, etc. The contributions from the UK were provided by Jenny Randles from the UFOIN files. One of these is the Llanerchymedd case, with of course no reference to the fact that other investigators found the case nowhere near as mysterious as did the UFOIN investigator. Another mentioned is the Nelson case, described as 'one of the most important and close encounters on record in England despite the fact that an alleged second witness was never interviewed.

Authoritativeness The majority of the contributions are signed, some are simply credited to APRO or NICAP. Some articles are by the editor, but the majority are by people prominent in the UFO field. In general articles are by people associated with that particular field, thus we have CEIIs by Ted Bloecher, The Coyne Case by Jennie Zeidman, psychiatric aspects by Berthold Schwarz, physical traces by Ted Phillips, etc. Many of these articles are of a high standard and provide valuable summaries. Unfortunately are of such high authority, and two very poor ones are those on Hallucinations, and the 'Myth Theory of UFOs', by Stuart Campbell. The first contains plain misinformation, and the second does not address the subject at all! Another rather off article on 'psychic Aspects of UFOs' by Arlan K Andrews, in-

vents its own terminology. Part of the trouble in this section is that articles were submitted ad hoc, rather than commissioned.

Bias Here one can make the immediate point that there is a massive US bias. Thus while there are numerous articles devoted to the minutiae of US Government investigations, there are no general articles on UFO research.

The individual articles reflect the bias of their contributors, which can usually be worked out from their position statements. A minority of articles, such as those by Campbell degenerate into polemics, but the only really unacceptable offender is Eileen Buckle with a piece on the Scoriton Mystery which launches a personal attack on Norman Oliver. There is a place for polemic in ufology, but not in what purports to be an authoritative work of reference. The editors should never have included such an article.

Up to dateness The majority of the articles are up to date, with coverage of cases up to the end of 1978. However a number of articles are old reprints, that on Angel Hair is 17 years old, the Hollow Earth, 10 years old; Power Failures and UFOs; 10 years; the 'Falling Leaf' Phenomena, 12 years. The real horror stories are an article on the 'Secret Weapon Theory of UFOs', which dates from 1950, and one on 'Orthotony' dating from 1960, with no update on Vallee's refutation, Saunders work or any recent developments, not is there an entry for BAVIC.

Internal arrangement There is no index or contents list, and as the articles are not always entered under the word which comes immediately to mind, searching for them can be rather difficult. There are cross references at the end of most articles. There are no lists of articles by author, lists of case studies or biographies, and locating individual items (e.g. how many UK cases are included?) is very difficult or impossible.

Bibliography There is a long, good bibliography of books and pamphlets by R M Rasmussen, which does not however, contain any abstracts or evaluations. A major defect is the absence of any 'further reading' lists at the end of individual articles. A chronology at the end is totally US oriented.

The encyclopaedia is a brave effort, far superior to such nonsense as The UFO Guidebook, and contains many valuable features. It can be recommended to both libraries and ufologists in the USA, but because of its poor treatment of the UK, and its high price here, probably cannot be recommended to British libraries. British ufologists would probably be advised to wait and see if a cheaper paperback edition comes out.

A second edition is apparently promised, and if it manages to tighten up editorial control and correct some of the weaknesses it will be a valuable contribution to the subject. - PR

DRUFFEL, Ann and D Scott ROGO. The Tujunga Canyon Contacts. Prentice Hall, 1980. \$9.95.

Not for the nervous! should be the warning on this book about a series of alleged abductions, bedroom visitors and other unpleasant experiences occurring over a 26-year period from 1953 to 1979 to a group of gay women in the San Francisco area. On reading of one woman 'awoken' by a strange whining sound, feeling paralysed then seeing a strange figure in the room, I was irresistibly reminded of the Miss Z experience described in MUFOB.

Whilst the book is fascinating, it is somewhat chaotically organised - rather like the investigation itself until Rogo joined it. Many of the hypnotic sessions conducted by Dr William McCall contain considerable prompting, and the presence of ufologists with their own needs to obtain more and more fascinating material must have been conducive to much fantasy. One of the participants came up with a 'cancer cure' - vinegar - with was given to her by the 'space people'. This, however turned out to be the local folk-remedy.

The co-authors are unable to come to any joint conclusion and present separate summaries. Ms Druffel speculates about 'angels', while Rogo is drawn to a psychological interpretation (albeit one which might be regarded as sexist in certain circles), but feels the need to introduce a mysterious 'The Phenomenon', which abstracts peoples dreams and somehow objectifies them. Some of us remember speculating along these lines about ten years ago before sacrificing such intermediaries to Occam's Razor.

I have avoided summarising the contents of the book or the sequence of abductions because they are really too complicated. Though not always easy to follow, this book should be read by all serious researchers.

CHRISTIE-MURRAY, David. Reincarnation: ancient beliefs and modern evidence David & Charles, 1981. £16.50

As the author of this book is a former Chairman of the SPR council, one would have expected a book which provided a critical examination of the evidence for reincarnation. Instead one gets an almost face value acceptance of everything from Edgar Cayce, through Bridey Murphy, the tales of Hans Holzer to the latest regression fantasies of Joe Keeton.

Regretably, only those living in the North-West of England will know that Keeton's cases were examined on a regional BBC tv series by Bill Grundy and Alf Bates, and were in all cases proven to be incorrect or unverifiable. For example, in a number of cases people were regressed to Census years, but not once did information verifiable from Census records turn up.

One 'classic' regression case was Anne Dowling, a Liverpool housewife who had a 'previous life' as a nineteenth century orphan in Everton. Keeton claimed (and is echoed by Christie-Murray) that she produced 'obscure' and verifiable facts about nineteenth century Liverpool. As was soon pointed out, while the facts were verifiable all right, they were far from obscure. Both facts and background were readily available in half-a-dozen books from any bookseller or library in a city noted for its interest in local history.

One problem appears to be that some academic 'experts' do not really know how much of what they consider to be 'obscure' information is readily available in popular local history reprints or well-researched historical novels.

The only serious evidence for reincarnation which really is thought provoking is that collected by Dr Ian Stevenson. This merits 12 pages towards the end of the

book - compared with 21 for Cayce.

A large part of the book is a survey of world reincarnation beliefs, also taken second-hand from unreliable and antique sources, along with an attempt to reconcile reincarnation with Christian theology.

BURGE, Weldon The UFO Cults Pamphlet Publications, Cincinnati, 1979.

Though this little pamphlet contains some interesting information on 'cults', the covert Christian Fundamentalist polemic is in evidence. As with many writers on such subjects no attempt is made to place such cults in perspective, or trace the history of their ideas. Thus few readers would realise that Allen Noonan's 'One World Family' appears to derive much of its theology from such English Civil War sects as 'My One Flesh', which preached a radical pantheism, the deliberate flouting of social convention and a social revolution based on Joachim of Fiore's 'Everlasting Gospel'.

Without extensive documentation, I am not prepared to believe that the Aetherius Society believes in wiping out all its opponents.

I am no friend of 'cults', but tend to question some of the more hysterical attacks made on them, which recall the 'anti-convent' riots in the 1850's.

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